

Discovering the depths of space deterrence - ACT

Written by Commander Alexis Beatrix, ACT Operational Experimentation Branch & Robin Michelle Barnett, Staff Writer

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Collective expertise from NATO, its member nations, the United Nations, the European Union, and Industry gathered at the Swiss Armed Forces College (AFC) in Lucerne, Switzerland from 1-5 October 2012 to assess the possibility of deterring actors from undertaking undesirable actions in space.

Organised and led by Allied Command Transformation (ACT), the MNE Space Deterrence Limited Objective Experiment (LOE) was executed as part of the Multinational Experiment (MNE) series, a forum for collaborative Concept Development and Experimentation (CD&E).

The LOE is part of the current MNE 7 Access to the Global Commons (AGC) a two-year multinational and interagency effort to develop improved coalition capabilities. The AGC functions to ensure continued access to use of Maritime, Air, Space and Cyberspace which is critical to future multinational operations.

During the weeklong event, a number of hypothetical crisis situations related to access and use of space were explored. Participants actively addressed situations that could threaten access or use of space by employing a process to manage the behaviour of actors.

"Deterring objectionable action in space is critical to securing future access to this vital global commons", stated United States Strategic Command (STRATCOM) Senior Advisor Brigadier General Thompson United States Air Force. "This experiment not only provided an opportunity

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to test the process but it highlighted a number of areas for future exploration."

The MNE Space Deterrence LOE incorporated the Concept Development Assessment Game (CDAG). The CDAG method utilises a construct of planning, confrontation, and data collection to allow designated player teams to assess a concept with the support from subject matter experts. It incorporates a futuristic scenario to ensure players are not deferring to decision making based on current routines, processes, practises and realities.

"What has become clear during the experiment is the number of natural feedback loops within the process, and in my experience this is the sign of a robust model", stated Air Commodore Paddy Teakle of the United Kingdom Royal Air Force.

The MNE Space Deterrence LOE results will be presented at a gathering of national senior leaders to be held in Oslo, Norway in December 2012. Attendees at the meeting will consider how the products will be offered for transition to the Nations.

"I am confident that we will deliver a product that will meet the expectations of the participating Nations, which is our utmost priority," said NATO MNE National Director and Experiment Lead, Commander Alexis Béatrix of the French Navy, iterating "I am amazed by the personal commitment of the participants and by the results we are gaining from this very multinational and multidisciplinary team."

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